

Target Zero Awards

Achievements in Traffic Safety

1. Category

- ☐ Impaired Driving
- ☒ Speed-Related Collisions
- ☐ Occupant Protection
- ☐ Run-Off-Road Collisions
- ☐ Intersection Collisions
- ☐ Traffic Data Systems

2. Entry Name

Project/Program Title: Cooperate to Eliminate - Traffic Fatalities
Individual/Group Name: WSP & Island County Sheriff's Office

3. Contact Information for person submitting entry

Name: Sergeant Jason Longoria
Address: 2700 116th St NE, Marysville WA 98271-9425
E-Mail: jason.longoria@wsp.wa.gov
Phone: 360-675-0710

4. Identify the project, program, or effort. This is the executive summary of the entry that describes

a) the situation or problem

In 2006, there was a record of 15 fatality collisions in Island County, WA. The majority of these collisions involved excessive speed as a contributing factor. This increase comes on the heels of dramatic increases in both 2004 and 2005. In 2004, there were 2 fatality collisions in Island County, and 2005 there were 9 fatality collisions. Consequently, there was a 750% increase in fatality collision in Island County from 2004 to 2006. Given this result, it was evident action needed to be taken.

b) actions taken

Due to the spike in fatality collisions, a partnership was fostered between the Washington State Patrol's Oak Harbor Detachment led by Sergeant Jason Longoria and the Island County Sheriff's Office under the guidance of newly elected Sheriff Mark Brown. The focus of this partnership was to stop the

increase in fatality collisions, and redirect the trend downward. This partnership evolved into a traffic law enforcement project titled, *Cooperate to Eliminate - Traffic Fatalities*. The two law enforcement agencies set out to curb the fatality collisions by high visibility traffic enforcement, less tolerance of speed violations, and spreading the project's message throughout the local community utilizing news media, and community meetings.

At the beginning of 2007 shortly after Sheriff Brown was sworn into office, he and Sergeant Longoria met with local newspapers conveying the message of this new partnership. Several print articles ran detailing the recent history of fatality collisions and local law enforcement concerns over the dramatic increase. Within the articles Sheriff Brown and Sergeant Longoria detailed their course of action to decrease the fatality collisions by increasing the number of traffic stops and the level of enforcement taken by officers while stopping violators.

The next area addressed was with the officers themselves. Both Sheriff Brown and Sergeant Longoria met with their respective officers to include them as stakeholders in this project. Since there was a steady increase of fatality collisions over the past three years, it was obvious that past enforcement efforts were ineffective with respect to decreasing fatality collisions. The two leaders laid out the path for the next year with their officers to gain their input and build support for the plan. Consequently, the officers were encouraged to increase the overall number of traffic stops and to increase their level of enforcement.

c) the result

As of November 2007, there have been 5 fatality collisions in Island County. This is truly a testament to the evolving enforcement efforts of both Island County Sheriff Deputies and Washington State Patrol Troopers. Below is the traffic stop amounts and speed enforcement taken by both agencies combined for 2006 and 2007, which has yielded this downward trend:

| | 2006 | 2007 | % of change |
|---------------------------|--------|--------|-------------|
| Traffic Stops | 18,063 | 25,018 | 18% |
| Speeding Citations Issued | 4223 | 4504 | 6% |
| Fatality Collisions | 15 | 5 | - 66% |

* Traffic stop data is from January 1st through October 31st for each year

5. Specify the proven strategies, best practices, or innovative strategies with a strong evaluation component used.

The goal of the *Cooperate to Eliminate - Traffic Fatalities* partnership is obvious. The proven strategies of high visibility traffic law enforcement and less tolerance for speeding violators to reduce and eventually eliminate all fatality collisions within Island County is working. The 66% reduction in fatality collisions is significant and affirms the need for partnerships to reach the goal of Target Zero.